

Human Development and Family Science



Colloquium

with

Anthony D. Ong, Ph.D.

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1:00 p.m. – Falk 104

Positive Emotions as Resilience and Vulnerability: Implications for Healthy Aging

Changes in cognitive and physiological functioning pervade the aging process. Importantly, alterations in these processes are not invariant with age, but are influenced by individual differences in resilience and vulnerability that accrue across the lifespan. In this talk, I focus on what is known about positive emotions as a contributing factor in both restorative and deteriorative health processes. Plausible mechanisms that underlie the association between positive emotions and mental and physical health are described, and illustrative studies examining these mechanisms are reviewed. Overall, findings indicate that the effects of positive emotions on health are bivalent in character, exerting both risk-protective and risk-augmenting effects. These findings point to new research questions that pose important challenges for future research.

Anthony D. Ong is Professor in the [Department of Psychology](#) and Director of the [Center for Integrative Developmental Science and Human Health Labs](#) at Cornell University. He also holds a research appointment at Weill Cornell Medicine, where he is Professor of Gerontology in Medicine. He received his Ph.D. in developmental psychology from the University of Southern California and completed his postdoctoral training in adult development and aging at the University of Notre Dame.